

Morning Lines - February 3

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Good Morning Minister,

We received questions on the following stories this morning:

1. **The Proposed Replacement of RCMP Contract Policing**
2. **Ottawa Police Considering Calling in Help**

We continue to track the following stories:

Police Union Fighting the Proposed Replacement of the RCMP

<https://www.infomedia.gc.ca/ps-sp/en/2022/02/03/242676231>

Background

- The RCMP is facing questions about whether it should end its policing of some municipal and provincial jurisdictions.
- Officials with the National Police Federation (NPF), the union representing RCMP members, have told Albertans that without the generous federal subsidies provided for using the RCMP, local and provincial taxpayers would have to add millions of dollars to their costs.
- In June, a parliamentary committee in Ottawa released a report that urged the federal government to "explore the possibility of ending contract policing within the Royal Canadian Mounted Police" and consider helping some jurisdictions establish their own provincial and territorial police services.
- In December, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau told Public Safety Minister Marco Mendicino in a mandate letter to "conduct an assessment of contract policing" in consultation with other governments.
- The current 20-year federal framework governing all contracts for local and provincial RCMP services expires in 2032

Lines

- The safety and security of Canadians is our government's top priority. All Canadians, no matter where they live, must have access to safe and reliable police services.
- In addition to being Canada's federal police force, communities across Canada rely on the RCMP for contract policing services.
- As noted in my mandate letter, we will be conducting an assessment of contract policing to ensure it meets the needs of the communities it serves.
- We will continue to engage with provinces, territories, municipalities, Indigenous partners and other stakeholders in this important work.

Ottawa Police Consider Calling in Help to End Protests

<https://www.infomedia.gc.ca/ps-sp/en/2022/02/03/242672926>

Background

- Ottawa Police Chief Peter Sloly said the city has considered using the military, as more protesters are expected this weekend.
- The Parliamentary Protective Service, which is overseen by the RCMP, manages security on Parliament Hill itself, but Ottawa Police have jurisdiction on the streets just off the hill.

- The article quotes Sloy, saying “the RCMP have offered more resources, but the Mounties have limits on the number of people they can bring.”
- Minister Mendicino is quoted in the article saying "We're doing everything we can to support Ottawa Police and as I say those lines of communication have been open. They are speaking every day. They're speaking virtually every hour and they're taking decisions on the ground operationally to ensure that there is community safety."

Lines

- Ottawa police services and parliamentary protective services remain the police of jurisdiction in the areas effected by protestors.
- Should the municipality ask for help, the RCMP will be ready to assist.
- The RCMP will continue to support law enforcement to manage disruptions and ensure all residents and those who work in downtown Ottawa feel safe.

Trucker Protests

Background

- Convoys of several thousand truckers and other protestors gathered in Ottawa to oppose vaccine mandates for Truckers.
- RCMP have reported that a portion of protestors intend to remain for an unknown period of time.
- Many of these protestors are motivated by IMVE, as swastikas, confederate flags, and other symbols of hate were displayed, and monuments vandalized.
- So far, 3 protestors have been arrested. OPS chief Sloy said that more charges are to come.

Lines

- Our government will always support the right to peaceful protest in Canada – but we will also always condemn violence and threats.
- These demonstrations have caused significant disruption to local businesses and community organizers, vandalism of our national war monuments, and blatant expressions of hate and incitement to violence.
- All elected officials must denounce this conduct as an affront to our democracy
- Local police are taking steps to remove obstructions, clear routes and restore safe access to the downtown core and parliamentary precinct
- We will continue to take whatever steps are necessary to keep the protest peaceful, ensure safe access downtown, and that those participating in the demonstration abide by the law, and respect local residents.
- Federal public safety partners will continue to support local police to ensure public safety.

If pressed - IMVE

- Our government will always support the right to peaceful protest in Canada – but we will also always condemn violence and threats.
- We are deeply concerned about the small number of vocal extremists opposition that is polluting much of our political debate.
- ideologically motivated violent extremism is “our most deadly extremist threat.”
- The Parliamentary Protective Service and local police will respond to any issues as necessary, and our national law enforcement and security agencies are continuously monitoring potential threats.

Coutts Blockade

<https://www.infomedia.gc.ca/ps-sp/en/2022/02/03/242673294>

Background

- On Wednesday, the RCMP reported that one lane in each direction on highway 4 had been opened.
- RCMP will escort vehicles between the border and Milk River to ensure safe passage, and aid in decongesting the area.
- Other POEs in the area have extended their hours to mitigate the congestion.

Lines

- We are closely monitoring the ongoing situation near Coutts, AB. While the Port of Entry itself is unaffected, a key stretch of Highway 4 just north of the border has been blockaded.
- The provincial government is primarily responsible for the situation, while the federal government coordinating closely and Minister Mendicino has spoken with his Alberta counterparts.
- On Tuesday, the CBSA expanded hours of service at the Carway and Del Bonita, AB crossings to help travelers and trade keep moving.
- The Alberta RCMP, as the local police of jurisdiction, are managing the situation. After repeated attempts to resolve things through discussions with the organizers, they have now begun to dismantle the blockade. They are best suited to speak to operational details.

Impact of the blockade

- The Coutts-Sweetgrass Border Crossing is among the most important in Western Canada, and a massive amount of goods – including perishable food and live animals – are currently stuck on both sides of the border.
- While we support peaceful protests, this illegal blockade poses serious risks.
- Local residents can't leave their town or be reached by emergency services, while hundreds of truckers are stuck in dangerous conditions, without access to food, water or restrooms.
- The blockade also is causing serious issues for a wide array of other businesses across the West who rely on the crossing to get their goods to market.

Opening Lanes

- On Wednesday, the RCMP confirmed that two lanes on highway 4 have been opened.
- The RCMP are escorting vehicles as they travel between the border and Milk River.
- The RCMP continue to press for safe passage and further progress in clearing the blockade.

GoFundMe

- We are aware that gofundme has paused the convoy's crowdfunding campaign.
- We know that a number of donors identified themselves as living abroad, in countries such as the United States, Australia, England or Poland.
- It is not possible to know how many people from outside Canada donated to the fundraising page, nor possible to know the number of US donors.

Have a nice day!

Andie Habert

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